Minnesota State Mankato Student AbdulRahmane Abdul-Aziz Named Finalist for Truman Scholarship

Mankato, Minn. – Minnesota State University, Mankato student AbdulRahmane Abdul-Aziz has been selected one of approximately 200 national finalists for the Truman Scholarship, a prestigious award given annually by the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation to about 60 Truman Scholars nationwide.

Abdul-Aziz and all the finalists will participate in regional interviews in March and early April, with Truman Scholars announced in late April.

Truman scholarships, according to the Truman Foundation, are the premier graduate scholarships for aspiring public service leaders in the United States. They provide up to $30,000 for graduate study, and those selected also receive priority admission and supplemental financial aid at some premier graduate institutions, leadership training, career and graduate school counseling, and special internship opportunities within the federal government.

Some of the criteria for selection as a Truman Scholar are one’s demonstrated participation in activities such as student government; government internships, commissions or boards; partisan or non-partisan political activity; community service; an intent to work in public service and desire to improve society or the environment.

Abdul-Aziz, a junior pursuing a political science and sociology double major, expects to graduate from Minnesota State Mankato in 2020. He is a first-generation immigrant from Togo.

Abdul-Aziz currently serves as a student trustee on the Minnesota State Board of Trustees, a 15-member board that governs 37 colleges and state universities in Minnesota. Abdul-Aziz is also president of Minnesota State Mankato’s student government, known as the Minnesota State Student Association (MSSA). Abdul-Aziz also serves on the board of directors for Students United, a non-profit organization that advocates for over 70,000 students attending Minnesota state universities.

In summer 2017, Abdul-Aziz was a project coordinator for the Office of Governor Mark Dayton and Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith, where he coordinated weekly Urban Youth Corps Internship enrichment sessions for seven high-risk youth to prepare them for personal and professional success.

After graduation, Abdul-Aziz plans to earn a master of public policy degree to create and implement community-centric policies focused on benefiting marginalized communities. His career goal is to become elected to public office so he can inspire and uplift youth.

For more information, contact University Fellowship Coordinator Giovanna Walters in Minnesota State Mankato’s Office of University Fellowships by phone at 507-389-1262 or by email at giovanna.walters@mnsu.edu.

No Minnesota State Mankato student has been named a Truman Scholar, and according to Walters, Abdul-Aziz is the first Minnesota State Mankato student to become a Truman finalist since the Office of University Fellowships was created at Minnesota State Mankato in 2013.

The Truman Scholarship Foundation was established by Congress in 1975 as the living memorial to President Harry S. Truman and the Presidential Memorial to Public Service. For more information, visit www.truman.gov. According to the Truman website, approximately 600 applications for the Truman Scholarship are submitted annually from institutions across the nation.
Minnesota State Mankato’s Departments of Political Science and Sociology are part of the University’s College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Minnesota State Mankato, a comprehensive university with 14,712 students, is part of the Minnesota State system, which includes 30 colleges and seven universities.